

**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT
OF
CONSERVATION**

STRATEGIC PLAN

May 24, 2000

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Missouri Department of Conservation
P.O. Box 180
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Message from the Director and Deputy Director

Every successful organization requires some amount of “strategic” planning. As the adage implies, if we don’t know where we’re going, any road will do. So it’s important to establish direction and milestones to keep us from wandering aimlessly across the conservation landscape. Moreover, it’s vital that everyone know what’s important to the agency. To set a course and not communicate it widely is to travel alone.

Our constitutional mandate and department mission and vision statements establish direction, but the issues and results stated in this plan give us greater focus, while performance measures give us the means for determining progress. All of these taken together will enhance our ability to manage the fish, forest, and wildlife resources and our need to be accountable to all the citizens of the state.

Unlike previous efforts, this plan will be subject to regular revisions. New issue may be added at anytime while existing items will be reported on annually and modified as new information is available or conditions change. In addition, much of the detail usually found in strategic plans has been purposefully omitted. Instead, we will focus on results and each Department unit and region will be expected to “operationalize” this plan through the various Department planning and budgeting processes available to them.

We are committed to this process as a part of how we do business. It has served the Department well over the past 25 years. We also value the comments and suggestions of the public and all Department employees, and we hope you’ll continue to support and contribute to this important effort.

Jerry M. Conley, Director

John W. Smith, Deputy Director

MISSOURI CONSTITUTIONAL LANGUAGE

CONSERVATION

Section 40(a). Conservation commission, members, qualifications, terms, how appointed—duties of commission—expenses of members.—The control, management, restoration, conservation and regulation of the bird, fish, game, forestry and all wildlife resources of the state, including hatcheries, sanctuaries, refuges, reservations and all other property owned, acquired or used for such purposes and the acquisition and establishment thereof, and the administration of all laws pertaining thereto, shall be vested in a conservation commission consisting of four members appointed by the governor, by and with the advice of and consent of the senate, not more than two of whom shall be of the same political party. The members shall have knowledge of and interest in wildlife conservation. The members shall hold office for terms of six years beginning on the first day of July of consecutive odd years. Two of the terms shall be concurrent; one shall begin two years before and one two years after the concurrent terms. If the governor fails to fill a vacancy within thirty days, the remaining members shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term. The members shall receive no salary or other compensation for their services as members, but shall receive their necessary traveling and other expenses incurred while actually engaged in the discharge of their official duties.

Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16 (as adopted November 3, 1936). (Amended August 8, 1972)

Section 40(b). Incumbent members.—The members of the present conservation commission shall serve out the terms for which they were appointed, with all their powers and duties.

Section 41. Acquisition of property—eminent domain.—The commission may acquire by purchase, gift, eminent domain, or otherwise, all property necessary, useful or convenient for its purposes, and shall exercise the right of eminent domain as provided by law for the highway commission.

Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16.

Section 42. Director of conservation and personnel of commission.—The commission shall appoint a director of conservation who, with its approval, shall appoint the assistants and other employees deemed necessary by the commission. The commission shall fix the qualifications and salaries of the director and all appointees and employees, and none of its members shall be an appointee or employee.

Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16.

Section 43(a). Sales tax, use for conservation purposes.—For the purpose of providing additional moneys to be expended and used by the conservation commission, department of conservation, for the control, management, restoration, conservation and regulation of the bird, fish, game, forestry and wildlife resources of the state, including the purchase or other acquisition of property for said purposes, and for the administration of the laws pertaining thereto, an additional sales tax of one-eighth of one percent is hereby levied and imposed upon all sellers for the privilege of selling tangible personal property or rendering taxable services at retail in this state upon the sales and services which now are or hereafter are listed and set forth in, and, except as to the amount of tax, subject to the provisions of and to be collected as provided in the “Sales Tax Law” and subject to the rules and regulations promulgated in connection therewith; and an additional use tax of one-eighth of one percent is levied and imposed for the privilege of storing,

using or consuming within this state any article of tangible personal property as set forth and provided in the “Compensating Use Tax Law” and, except as to the amount of the tax, subject to the provisions of and to be collected as provided in the “Compensating Use Tax Law” and subject to the rules and regulations promulgated in connection therewith.

(Adopted November 2, 1976)

Section 43(b). Use of revenue and funds of conservation commission.—The moneys arising from the additional sales and use taxes provided for in section 43(a) hereof and all fees, moneys or funds arising from the operation and transactions of the conservation commission, department of conservation, and from the application and the administration of the laws and regulations pertaining to the bird, fish, game, forestry and wildlife resources of the state and from the sale of property used for said purposes, shall be expended and used by the conservation commission, department of conservation, for the control, management, restoration, conservation and regulation of bird, fish, game, forestry and wildlife resources of the state, including the purchase or other acquisition of property for said purposes, and for the administration of the laws pertaining thereto, and for no other purpose. The moneys and funds of the conservation commission arising from the additional sales and use taxes provided for in S 43(a) hereof shall also be used by the conservation commission, department of conservation, to make payments to counties for the unimproved value of land for distribution to the appropriate political subdivisions as payment in lieu of real property taxes for privately owned land acquired by the commission after July 1, 1977, and for land classified as forest cropland in the forest cropland program administered by the department of conservation in such amounts as may be determined by the conservation commission, but in no event shall amount determined be less than the property tax being paid at the time of purchase of acquired lands.

Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16. (Amended November 2, 1976) (Amended November 4, 1980)

Section 43(c). Effective date—self-enforceability.—The effective date of this amendment shall be July 1, 1977. All laws inconsistent with this amendment shall no longer remain in full force and effect after July 1, 1977. All of the provisions of sections 43(a)-(c) shall be self-enforcing except that the general assembly shall adjust brackets for the collection of the sales and use taxes.

(Adopted November 2, 1976)

Section 44. Self-enforceability—enabling clause—repealing clause.—Sections 40-43, inclusive, of this article shall be self-enforcing, and laws not inconsistent therewith may be enacted in aid thereof. All existing laws inconsistent with this article shall no longer remain in force or effect.

Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16

Section 45. Rules and regulations—filing—review.—The rules and regulations of the commission not relating to its organization and internal management shall become effective not less than ten days after being filed with the secretary of state as provided in section 16 of this article, and such final rules and regulations affecting private rights as are judicial or quasi-judicial in nature shall be subject to the judicial review provided in section 22 of article V.

Section 46. Distribution of rules and regulations.—The commission shall supply to all persons on request, printed copies of its rules and regulations not relating to organization or internal management.

OUR MISSION

To protect and manage the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state; to serve the public and facilitate their participation in resource management activities; and to provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about fish, forest, and wildlife resources.

OUR VISION

To have healthy, sustainable plant and animal communities throughout the state of Missouri for future generations to use and enjoy, and that fish, forest, and wildlife resources are in appreciably better condition tomorrow than they are today.

That all Missourians understand the relationship and value of plant and animal communities to our social and economic well being.

That citizens and government agencies work together to protect, sustain, enhance, restore, or create sustainable plant and animal communities of local, state, and national significance.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

All citizens are important and we value their trust, regardless of their point of view: All Missouri citizens deserve respect. Our job is to listen, understand, and personally deliver programs and services in a manner that promotes relationships based on trust.

Excellent public service is what we will provide: We are committed to providing excellent public service in a manner that benefits fish, forest, and wildlife resources and encourages citizens to be active participants and conservationists.

Fairness, objectivity, sound science, integrity, responsibility is what we expect of ourselves: Our decisions and behavior will be based on fairness, objectivity, and the best scientific information; we will act with the highest degree of integrity and ethical consideration.

Employees are the Department's most important resource: All employees deserve a safe, high quality work environment that promotes opportunities for professional and personal growth, teamwork, and individual respect.

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INTRODUCTION

History of Strategic Planning in the Department of Conservation

The Conservation Commission is vested by the state constitution with the responsibility for “The control, management, restoration, conservation and regulation of the bird, fish, game, forestry and all wildlife resources of the state...”. Under the watchful eye of Missouri citizens, this mandate has guided the Department and remains a model for all state conservation agencies. Indeed, over the past 63 years we have witnessed many fish, forest, and wildlife management success stories, most of which can be attributed, at least in some way, to the forethought and courage of those who believed in the idea of a stable, non-political Conservation Commission. In 1976, the citizen approved 1/8 of one percent sales tax earmarked for the Department began a new era of conservation in Missouri. Stable funding would now make long range planning a possibility and Department accountability to all citizens of the state would become increasingly important.

In 1977 the Department’s “Design for Conservation” provided strategic direction for the agency and its programs. “Design” was created in response to changing social values, demands, and other pressures on the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state, and for 10 years the goals of “Design” guided the agency through an exciting period of growth. In 1989, the first of two five-year strategic plans was developed. The FY 1990-1994 plan focused on the need to develop a planned management system for determining Department priorities. The “Strategic Plan” and subsequent operational plans guided the agency through a time of increased emphasis on public lands and resources, and stressed the development of additional programs, especially in the area of conservation education. The FY 1996-2000 plan highlighted social changes, citizen involvement, partnerships, aquatic resources, technology, and private land issues. A change in agency leadership in 1997 as well as many organizational changes effectively rendered the FY1996-2000 plan obsolete by the end of that year.

In 1995 Governor Mel Carnahan signed the Commission on Management and Productivity (COMAP) Implementation Order 94-04. This Order mandated the adoption of an integrated strategic planning process by all state agencies and creation of an Interagency Planning Council (IPC). The Department has been an active participant on the Council and an original member of the COMAP. During this time, the Department’s FY 1996-2000 strategic plan, was the only “working” strategic plan in state government and was a model for the IPC as it developed a state strategic planning model and guidelines.

The New Process and Plan

Influenced by changing philosophies and trends in strategic planning for government agencies, the current planning process takes a slightly different approach than previous efforts. The emphasis is on key issues, results, and performance measures rather than objectives or activities. It is also a dynamic process rather than a once every five-year event. Issues were identified by staff from all levels within the Department. In addition, all Regional Management Guidelines (RMGs) were reviewed in an effort to discover issues not previously included. All issues were compiled by the Policy Coordination Section and reviewed by the Conservation Commission, Director, Deputy Director, Division Administrators, and Section Chiefs.

OVERVIEW

This plan will be reviewed annually and progress reported to the Commission and all Department staff. Administration will be responsible for the strategic plan; however, new issues may be offered by anyone at anytime. The result will be a more useful and up-to-date Department strategic plan that also meets the needs of the state Office of Administration, Budget and Planning.

This strategic plan is a guiding document for the Department of Conservation. Its purpose is to highlight important agency issues and to assign priority to achieving specified results. It is not designed to encompass everything the agency does or wants to do, those items are captured thru various other documents, guidelines, and individual workplans. Rather, this plan is a way to communicate with ourselves and the public about some of the most urgent, or important issues facing the agency.

We view this plan and process as an integral part of how the Department does business. Results and performance measures will be monitored and reported. Issues, results and measures will be added, deleted, or modified as necessary. Moreover, division and regional workplans and budgets should have obvious linkages to strategic issues where appropriate. The planning process and document have also been designed to meet the requirements of the state Integrated Strategic Planning Process and the IPC's Model and Guidelines.

Accountability is key to achieving the strategic plan results. Summary reports will be prepared periodically to track progress. Annual planning and budgeting processes will be essential to identifying and carrying out the necessary actions required to achieve success. All Department units will be responsible for integrating strategic issues and results into their activities. Initially, performance measures have been identified for all

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

results. In some cases these numbers are surrogate measures and will be used until better measures can be developed or identified. Baseline numbers, where available, will be used for comparative purposes in future years. Data sources have been identified for all measures and specific units and individuals will be assigned responsibility for gathering and recording data.

In developing this strategic plan, a number of assumptions have been made about the resources, people, and the work of the Department. While the world in which we live is constantly changing, the following key assumptions are critical to achieving the Department's mission and fulfilling its mandate. Key assumptions include:

- Missourians value fish, forests, wildlife, habitats, and natural communities, and believe in and support the fundamental premise of conservation.
- Missouri's human population will continue to grow and spread across the land increasing the struggle to protect and restore natural resources.
- There is a need for more and better information and knowledge about fish, forests, wildlife, and the people who use and enjoy these resources.
- Serious strides in conservation of natural resources must involve partnerships, cooperation, and collaboration of public and private interests.
- Private property rights are sacrosanct to Missourians and must be held in high regard by the Department.
- The Department's budget will remain stable for the foreseeable future.

MISSOURI CONSERVATION COMMISSION STRATEGIC GOALS

The following eight strategic goals were developed and adopted by the Conservation Commission on April 19, 2000 and are intended to provide general guidance and direction for the Department and staff.

Goal #1: Continuously improve our business management systems

Goal #2: Preserve and restore the state's biodiversity.

Goal #3: Inform and educate the public about fish, forest,
and wildlife conservation.

Goal #4: Help landowners manage their land for sustainable resources.

Goal #5: Public land that invites public use.

Goal #6: Integration of conservation principles and urban lifestyles.

Goal #7: Effective conservation partnerships.

Goal #8: Retain public support and recruit new participants.

Goal 1: Continuously Improve our Business Management Systems

Overview: The last decade taught us that success is contingent upon our ability to change and respond to change. Technology and changing public and employee expectations require us to constantly seek new ways of managing and organizing our work processes and decision-making. Moreover, enhanced communication, teamwork, and participatory management will generate innovative approaches to how we deal with conservation issues.

However, the ultimate success or failure of the Department hinges on the quality, character, and dedication of the Commission and its employees. Department support of employee needs such as adequate training, equipment, and facilities is critical to our effectiveness. Equitable compensation and contemporary benefits enhance the relationship between employer and employee and help to enrich the organization and the personal lives of those who choose the Department as their professional home.

Strategic Issue: Workforce Diversity

The Department serves a diverse public, all of whom pay the Conservation Sales Tax that provides most Department funding. Population trends indicate that by the early 21st Century, the composition of the population and workforce will be significantly different than today's labor market. To the degree that qualified candidates can be recruited, a diverse workforce is desirable.

It's important that all people, regardless of race, gender or ability be given the opportunity to learn about resource management and experience conservation recreation. Moreover, the desires and expectations of all groups can be better understood when they are represented in our workforce. In turn, the Department gains credibility when its employees are not only highly qualified but also representative of the population. While the Department has served these groups well in the past, having more employees with diverse backgrounds and viewpoints will ensure the Department's effectiveness in the future.

Desired Results

❖ Positive trend in the employment and retention of women, minorities and the disabled in Department positions.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Number of participants in targeted recruitment events intended to encourage women and minority interest in conservation careers
- ✓ Average tenure of women, minorities and disabled Department employees.

Strategic Issue: Leadership Training

All employees deserve a safe, high quality work environment which promotes opportunities for professional and personal growth, teamwork and individual respect. To meet this challenge, Department leaders must possess professional, technical and administrative skills which support creativity, open communication, and ability to adapt to change. While the Department's existing training program provides the basic framework for developing leadership skills, a more comprehensive and structured approach will enhance staff leadership ability.

Desired Results

- ❖ Employees who possess and exercise leadership qualities.
- ❖ A leadership training program for all employees.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Number of employees achieving leadership competencies.
- ✓ Number of employees who successfully complete leadership training.

Goal 2: Preserve and Restore the State's Biodiversity

Overview: Missouri is home to a diverse array of plants, animals, and natural communities. More than 5000 species of plants and at least 20,000 animal species occur in almost 200 recognized communities. The state's biota includes species from adjacent biomes as well as species and communities found only in Missouri. Key to conserving the state's biodiversity is the need for an ecosystem approach which includes resource planning at a regional or landscape scale, and restoration and management of native plants and animal communities. Special emphasis on expanding our Natural Areas System, and protecting unique habitats, critical habitats for state and federally threatened or endangered species, and habitats of special interest (e.g., early successional stage habitats) is also critical.

From species protection and restoration to game management, fish and wildlife populations are central to the mission of the agency. While it's impossible to separate populations from their habitats, the relative health and abundance of fish and wildlife populations is a good indicator of the overall health of our natural environment. In addition, some species are important to people as sources of food and recreation, and subsequently, have high social and economic values, while other species may be categorized as nuisance because they conflict with human activities. The Department is committed to balancing restoration and population management objectives with societal needs as well as providing legitimate public use of these resources (i.e., hunting, fishing, and trapping) to facilitate resource management and enrichment of our lives through important traditions.

Strategic Issue: Endangered Species

Missouri's landscape has been one of dramatic and constant change over the past 100 years. The environment has changed rapidly because of increasing demands by a growing human population for water, land, and energy to support agriculture, industry, transportation, and other interests. These changes are stressing many of our natural communities and the native plant and animal species they sustain. As a result, a substantial number of plant and animal species in Missouri have experienced severe population declines and some have been extirpated.

Desired Results

- ❖ No additional species extirpations.
- ❖ Improvement in the status (state ranks) of species of conservation concern.
- ❖ No additions to the *Missouri Species of Conservation Concern Checklist*.
- ❖ Public and private landowners working to protect and conserve endangered species and their habitats.
- ❖ Improvements in the quality and quantity of habitat for endangered species.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Number of species added to federal threatened, endangered, or candidate lists.
- ✓ Number of federally listed threatened or endangered species de-listed or reclassified.
- ✓ Number of state endangered species de-listed.
- ✓ Number of species added to state endangered list.
- ✓ Number of federal recovery and state action plans implemented.
- ✓ Number of voluntary endangered species management and recovery agreements initiated with private landowners.
- ✓ Acres of endangered species habitat, aquatic and terrestrial, protected, improved, and conserved.

Strategic Issue: Deterioration of the Aquatic Environment

The quality of Missouri's aquatic resources continues to be adversely affected by land use practices and water resource projects. This trend will continue with increased population growth, industrialization, urbanization, and chemical dependent agricultural practices. Since the water resource is essential for all life, and provides a tremendous amount of recreation for people who enjoy swimming, fishing, boating and sightseeing, it is incumbent on the Department to protect and enhance the integrity of this resource. Failure to address this issue will result in an erosion of the public trust in addition to the loss of critical resources and aquatic species. The development of in-stream flow standards and policies, and a comprehensive state water law are key to a successful program dedicated to reducing aquatic resource deterioration. Working together with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources on the development and enforcement of rules and regulations affecting confined animal feeding operations, in-stream gravel mining, chip mills, and

other threats to the quality of aquatic resources is crucial.

Desired Results

- ❖ Improved water quality in Missouri's lakes, rivers, and streams.
- ❖ Enacted state water law that protects instream flow.
- ❖ Development/implementation of a targeted aquatic resource monitoring program.
- ❖ Urban watershed conservation in metropolitan counties.
- ❖ Reduced erosion and sedimentation.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Miles of stream designated as state high quality waters.
- ✓ Miles of impaired streams.
- ✓ Acres of impaired lakes.
- ✓ Acres of watersheds under best management practices to protect aquatic resources.
- ✓ Miles of riparian corridor restored or protected.
- ✓ Number of pollution incidents and fish kills.

Strategic Issues: Completing Missouri's Natural Areas System

The goal of Missouri's Natural Areas Program is to protect and manage representative examples of terrestrial and aquatic natural communities and geologic features found in each of the state's natural sections. Currently, 171 Natural Areas have been designated, but the system is far from complete. Emphasis needs to be directed toward both public and private land additions to existing Natural Areas as well as to identification and designation of other quality areas to conserve the full array of Missouri's natural communities and native landscapes. Also, existing Natural Areas need increased levels of management to enhance their natural quality, control invasive exotic species, and provide for compatible public use.

Desired Results

- ❖ Comprehensive representation of Missouri's natural communities and native species in the Natural Areas System.
- ❖ Management of Natural Areas on an ecosystem level where feasible.
- ❖ Increased representation of natural communities within native landscapes.
- ❖ Increased private landowner participation in the Natural Areas program.
- ❖ Increased Natural Area acreage.
- ❖ Public appreciation and understanding of the values of natural areas.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Number of new Natural Areas designated.

- ✓Number of private in-holdings or other critical additions acquired or secured.
- ✓Number of Natural Areas representing multiple natural communities and features.
- ✓Number of Natural Areas achieving control of exotic species invasions.
- ✓Number of acres of Natural Area buffer undergoing restoration.

Strategic Issue: Tallgrass Prairie Conservation

Tallgrass prairies are diverse grasslands with an abundance of wildflowers and few woody plants. More than 800 plant species occur on Missouri's prairies. The structure and composition of this natural community provides habitat to hundreds of animals. Some have adapted to changes in the landscape, others are gone, and still others are declining and will soon be lost from the Missouri landscape without a concerted conservation effort.

Our tallgrass prairie heritage is significant. At least 15 million acres of Missouri, covering more than a third of the state, were tallgrass prairie at the time of European settlement. Prairies occurred in every part of Missouri, including the Ozarks and the Bootheel. Today, fewer than 90,000 acres of Missouri's original prairie remains, mostly restricted to the Osage Plains Natural Division. More than 22,000 acres of this prairie is open to the public. Missouri's public prairies are owned and managed by the Department, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, the Missouri Prairie Foundation, the University of Missouri and the Ozark Regional Land Trust. About 68,000 acres remain in private ownership. Many private landowners value their prairies and maintain them as forage for livestock.

Protecting tallgrass prairie flora and fauna will require active management of existing remnants and an aggressive campaign to reconstruct prairies, better manage grasslands and promote the planting of native prairie species.

Desired Results

- ❖Existing tallgrass prairie remnants are managed through selective cutting of woody species, periodic haying, grazing and prescribed burning.
- ❖Additional acres of prairie are established through reconstruction with native seed sources.
- ❖Additional acres are acquired by the Department or other conservation partners.
- ❖Public awareness of tallgrass prairie is increased and there is increased visitation to public prairies.
- ❖Prairie remnants on private land are better managed through targeted technical assistance from the Department and Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- ❖Prairie dependant wildlife rebounds to secure reproducing populations.

Performance Measures

- ✓Acres of remnant tallgrass prairie on Department areas.
- ✓Acres of reconstructed prairie on Department areas and other public lands.

- ✓Number of workshops provided using “Guidelines for Reconstruction, Restoration and Management of Prairie and Savanna Natural Communities of the Glaciated Plains of Missouri”.
- ✓Acres of private land prairie managed and protected through conservation easement or other tools for long-term protection.
- ✓Number of visitors to public prairies.

Strategic Issue: Conserving Karst Environments

Numerous Regional Management Guidelines and especially those in the southern two thirds of Missouri identify karst communities as unique environments rich in biodiversity and in need of specific management attention. Of particular note is the number of very distinct conservation topics related directly to the proper management of karst environments. These include water quality maintenance (especially groundwater quality), management of numerous endangered species, and coldwater fisheries. Springs play a major role in maintaining base flows of Ozark stream. These springs largely provide the water regimes and temperatures that maintain the fauna of these streams and support cool water fisheries. In view of the number of issues affected by the proper management of karst communities, encouragements for management of karst features on private lands are needed.

Desired Results

- ❖Improved management of Missouri’s karst communities, especially on private lands.

Performance Measures

- ✓Number of caves inventoried and classified annually.
- ✓Number of landowners agreeing to adopt best management practices.

Strategic Issue: Missouri River Habitat Enhancement Opportunities

In response to major floods in 1993 and again in 1995, the Department partnered with several federal agencies and private entities to acquire significant acreage along the Missouri River. Several thousand acres were purchased during the 1990s as part of efforts to establish the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge, continue the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer’s Missouri River Mitigation Project, and begin the Department’s Riverlands initiative. In addition, more than 69,000 acres has been recently authorized via the 1999 Water Resources Development Act to create habitats on the Missouri River in addition to the 28,000 acres previously authorized under the Missouri River Mitigation Project. Changes to the Corps’ Missouri River Master Manual, specifically lower summer flows, also offer opportunity to achieve significant biological gains as well as increased river related recreation. Needs identified in Regional Management Guidelines include passive and active reforestation, wetland

enhancements, and the re-establishment of sand islands, chutes and backwater habitats. The need for such enhancements is heightened by resurging public interest in Missouri River recreation and the historic Lewis and Clark expedition.

Desired Results

- ❖ Fish and wildlife habitat enhancements on the Missouri River and on public and private lands in the Missouri River floodplain.
- ❖ Changes to the Missouri River Master Manual favoring a period of low summer flows.
- ❖ A Missouri River recreation study.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Number of habitat enhancement projects.
- ✓ Number of acres acquired from willing sellers.
- ✓ Number of partnership projects with USACOE on state owned lands.
- ✓ Missouri River flows during July - September.

Strategic Issue: Wetland Diversity

Over 90% of Missouri's wetland resource has been lost. Those lost wetlands were a rich complex of types including marsh, wet prairie, fens, forested and shrub wetlands. The Department's success in developing moist soil habitat (*A Summary of Successes—The MDC Wetland Management Plan, 1989 - 1997*) highlights the opportunity to now expand our focus toward the other types of wetlands that comprise the ecosystem. A focus on managing for a diversity of wetland types is the next natural step in the continuing progression of wetland management in Missouri. This step was articulated in the 1997 draft Department Wetland Management Plan. The statewide draft plan was not finalized, as the development of Regional Management Guidelines (RMGs) was about to begin. The RMG process did not, however, replace the need for statewide direction, which should continue to evolve and improve as does our understanding of the resource and our ability to manage it. RMG documents defined wetland types differently, which will make rolling-up regional wetland accomplishments to the unit and state level difficult. The need for statewide direction and accomplishment tracking ability can be addressed through adoption of a Department wetland policy or plan which establishes common field terminology and challenges every manager of a wetland area to significantly increase the diversity of wetland types.

Desired Results

- ❖ An increase in the number and acreage of forested wetlands, wet prairies, fens, late successional marshes and shrub wetlands on Department areas.
- ❖ An increase in the number and acreage of forested wetlands, wet prairies, fens, late successional marshes and shrub wetlands on private land.

- ❖ A system to track Department wetland restoration and management statewide.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Acres of forested wetlands, wet prairies, late successional marshes and shrub wetlands on Department areas.
- ✓ Acres of forested wetlands, wet prairies, late successional marshes and shrub wetlands on private land.
- ✓ Acres of fens and seeps identified and protected on Department areas.
- ✓ Number of Department areas with breeding populations of American bitterns, least bitterns, teal and rails.
- ✓ Number of Department areas with a population of eastern massasauga and western chicken turtle.
- ✓ Number of late successional marsh and shrub wetland acres designated as Natural Areas.

Strategic Issue: Bottomland Forest Restoration and Sustainable Management

Bottomland forests support a diversity of plant and animal communities and protect water quality. However, many bottomland forests throughout the state are degraded. Major floods in 1993 and 1995 killed or damaged thousands of acres of bottomland forests along the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers and many of their tributaries. Many bottomland forests were declining prior to the floods because of increased soil saturation caused by levees, dams, or other artificial means of water control. Because of the important functions of bottomland forest systems, their restoration and sustainable management is desirable. Many efforts to re-forest degraded or regenerate mature bottomland forests have been marginally successful. Artificial regeneration in degraded bottomland forests has been hampered by weedy competition such as reeds canary grass, ricecut grass, or Johnson grass and early-successional woody species such as willow and cottonwood. Moreover, natural regeneration of desirable woody species in many mature bottomland forests is inadequate. Restoration and sustainable management problems are exacerbated by attempting to re-establish woody species that are either poorly adapted or are not adapted to the present-day hydrology. Some sites now may be too wet for re-establishing forest vegetation. Methods are needed for evaluating present-day hydrology and site conditions, and matching suitable species and silvicultural systems to these conditions. Also, more attention should be given to assessing potential impacts that extreme floods may have on restored bottomland forests.

Desired Results

- ❖ Effective bottomland forest restoration and sustainable management methods and information for Department managers to use on both public and private land.
- ❖ Increased acres of healthy bottomland forest on public and private lands throughout the state.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Number of acres of bottomland forest restoration projects in which the survival and growth of tree species meet minimum criteria, are monitored, and relate to hydrology, soils and other site condition factors.
- ✓ Number of research studies to identify suitable bottomland forest restoration and sustainable management methods for different bottomland systems and landtype associations throughout the state.
- ✓ Number of supporting technical papers providing information on bottomland forest restoration and management derived from monitoring and research and other information sources.
- ✓ Development and use of Department guidelines on bottomland forest restoration and management.

Strategic Issue: Control of Invasive Exotic Species

Modern transportation and commerce, and peoples' propensity for unique or improved species has led to the introduction of many invasive exotic species to Missouri. Some of these species like purple loosestrife, zebra mussels, feral hogs, big head carp, and kudzu are extremely aggressive and negatively affect Missouri's native species. The Department cannot meet its mandate to safeguard Missouri's natural resources without addressing the control of these alien invaders.

Desired Results

- ❖ Reduced distribution and densities of select invasive exotic species.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Distribution and density of select species.

Strategic Issue: Prairie-Chicken Population Decline

The trend of the resident population is best described by annual counts made along 13 southern routes that include 236 square miles. In 1999, a total of 169 birds on booming grounds were counted on these surveys. This is up slightly from 1998's count of 127 birds, but isn't enough to indicate a detour from the long-term downward trend that has been in place since the late 1960s. If the trend set over the past 30 years continues, our birds will be gone in 10 years. In 1988, the Department conducted a statewide census of Prairie-chickens on booming grounds that has since been repeated on a five-year interval. If we exclude those populations in northern Missouri established from re-introductions, the dramatic decline of our resident population is very apparent. In 1988, 1,400 male prairie-chickens were counted statewide, in 1993, 1,045; and in 1998, 370. Declines have occurred across the range and across all levels of habitat quality. Quantity and

quality of habitat sets the upper and lower limits to which a population rises or sinks. Landscape scale improvement continues to be our only viable option to reversing the trend.

Desired Results

- ❖ Positive trend in resident prairie-chicken population numbers.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Statewide population trend numbers.

Strategic Issue: Snow Goose Population Reduction

Mid-continent lesser snow goose populations exceed 4 million birds, more than 300% above levels of the mid-1970s. The abundance of these birds has caused serious degradation or destruction (perhaps permanent) of fragile Arctic tundra flora and fauna. Populations continue to increase at 5% per year causing dispersement to adjacent areas widening the zone of destruction. In addition, high populations are causing increasing conflicts with agriculture and fears of avian cholera outbreaks that could threaten other bird populations. The current light goose population objective is to reduce the mid-winter index by 50%. Modified liberal hunting rules and regulations are being promoted to help achieve the population goals. Subsistence harvest, including taking eggs, will be encouraged on the breeding grounds. Concern exists that such actions could reflect poorly on the image of hunters, hunting, and the agencies involved. The Department must do what it can to garner public understanding and support to address this serious problem.

Desired Results

- ❖ Public understanding of the snow goose problem and informed consent of control methods.
- ❖ Continental light goose population index at less than 1.5 million birds.
- ❖ An annual statewide harvest of 40,000 or more light geese.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Public support or opposition to control methods.
- ✓ Snow goose population indices.
- ✓ Missouri snow goose harvest levels.

Strategic Issue: Decline in Quail and Rabbit Populations

In the last 30 years small game populations, specifically quail and rabbit, have experienced dramatic declines. A corresponding decline has also been noted in the number of small-game

hunters. There are several factors that can affect quail and rabbit population levels; however, this long-term decline is likely the result of large-scale habitat changes. If we hope to maintain Missouri's small game hunting heritage, we must do a better job of managing our public lands for small game populations and find new ways to promote the development and maintenance of early-successional stage habitat on private lands.

Desired Results

❖ Improved quail and rabbit populations on public and private lands.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Population numbers for quail.
- ✓ Population numbers for rabbit.
- ✓ Number of small game permit holders.

Goal 3: Inform and Educate the Public about Conservation

Overview: The future of conservation will be determined by the interest and actions of Missourians. Helping citizens realize or understand the importance of conservation and the value of fish, forest, and wildlife resources to our daily lives is a continuous task, and ultimately, real conservation will occur only when the people embrace these values. Differing values within our society (e.g., rural versus urban) make the challenge increasingly difficult. Urban people express widespread interest in conservation issues, yet the apparent disconnect between urban dwellers and the natural world makes it hard to interpret the meaning of their interest and real level of commitment to hard natural resource conservation decisions; decisions that may affect the urban lifestyle.

Increasing awareness and understanding of conservation will help to create a supportive and informed public. Public support is responsible for our past success. We must continue to make the public active partners in conservation by providing programs and materials that teach them conservation principles and inform them of the state of their fish, forests, and wildlife. Moreover, we must teach by example. In addition to the way we manage fish, forest, and wildlife resources and public land, we must also embrace the broader issues such as clean air, clean drinking water, energy conservation, and recycling.

Strategic Issue: Conservation Education

As our human population increases and becomes more urbanized, opportunities for people to interact with fish, forest, and wildlife resources diminish. These resources may be perceived by many residents as unimportant to their daily lives and survival. Therefore, providing opportunities for direct experience with natural resources, as well as teaching people about the benefits of those

resources is critical. This is best accomplished by encouraging schools to use the environment as an integrating context to teach math, science, social studies, and the language arts.

Desired Results

- ❖ All Missourians understand the relationship and value of plant and animal communities to our social and economic well being.
- ❖ Strong public support for conservation of fish, forest, and wildlife communities.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Number of students receiving conservation education materials.
- ✓ Number of teachers receiving conservation and environmental education training.
- ✓ Number of schools developing and using outdoor classrooms.
- ✓ Citizen attitudes about conservation issues.
- ✓ Number of Missourians that are members of major conservation organizations.
- ✓ Number of Stream Teams, Forest Keepers, and Department Volunteers.

Strategic Issue: Human/Wildlife Conflicts

Missouri's increasing human population, urbanization, highway construction and wildlife populations, especially those of deer, resident Canada geese, skunks, beaver, racoon, river otter, and coyotes, are contributing to an increasing number of human/wildlife conflicts. These conflicts include both nuisance and damage incidents that are often exacerbated by the activities/practices of the land- or homeowner, or that of their neighbor(s), and are perceived differently by each individual depending on his/her values and tolerances. The Department's goal must be to provide timely, effective assistance to landowners experiencing wildlife conflicts, while also teaching people about living with wildlife, and managing populations of various species at levels consistent with the local communities' tolerance. Skunks, beaver, river otter, racoon and coyotes currently are the furbearers most frequently involved in the human/wildlife conflicts. Considering current fur prices and their relationship to trapping effort and harvest, we should expect more conflicts involving these species and should be prepared with Department personnel trained to respond accordingly.

Desired Results

- ❖ Manage populations of urban Canada geese consistent with community tolerance.
- ❖ Manage populations of deer in urban areas consistent with community tolerance.
- ❖ Respond to wildlife nuisance/damage complaints effectively and in a timely manner.
- ❖ Maintain healthy furbearer populations while minimizing damage complaints and disease risks.

Performance Measures

- ✓Population levels of urban Canada geese.
 - ✓Number of goose damage complaints in urban areas.
 - ✓Population levels of deer in urban areas/management zones.
 - ✓Number of deer damage complaints in urban areas/management zones.
 - ✓Complainant's satisfaction with service provided.
 - ✓Response time to assistance requests.
 - ✓Furbearer harvest numbers.
 - ✓Number of damage complaints for each species.
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Goal 4: Help Landowners Manage Their Land for Sustainable Resources

Overview: Historically, the Department has offered a variety of programs and services to landowners to assist them with their land management needs. Whether it be restoring lost habitat, improving the management of forest land, or managing for fish, wildlife, and recreation, the Department has worked hard to get needed information in the hands of the landowner. Ultimately, success is defined by the landowner and hinges on how well we help the landowner realize their management goals. For many, restoring and preserving habitats, fish and wildlife is enough. For others, finding the right mix of conservation practices relative to other land uses is the key. And for many, the issue is economically driven, i.e. profiting from abundant, well managed resources.

The future of fish, forest, and wildlife resources lies in the hands of the private landowner. Not only must we encourage the private landowners to invest in these resources, but we must help them invest in a manner that enhances the quality and relative abundance of the resources over time.

Strategic Issue: Private Land Stewardship

Missouri is approximately 93% privately owned. Most wetlands and prairies have been lost or severely fragmented due to agricultural uses or urbanization. Grassland birds are in serious decline. Riparian corridors are row-cropped or over-grazed by cattle. Habitat fragmentation threatens biodiversity. And forest landowners face difficult choices for managing their forest lands wisely and profitably. Our efforts must be better grounded in detailed information about the land and landowners, including new ideas on how to increase landowner awareness about the resources, and ways to influence the behavior of landowners. Moreover, all landowners motivated to improve their land for conservation purposes expect and deserve timely response from our agency.

Desired Results

❖Landowners actively protecting, managing, and/or restoring fish, forest, and wildlife habitats or natural communities.

- ❖ Measurable positive changes in the landscape.
- ❖ Excellent service to landowners.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Total number of cooperative landowner projects and resource management plans (i.e., Stewardship plans, LAWS contracts, CRP and WRP contracts, stream habitat improvement projects, Forest Cropland contracts).
- ✓ Total number of acres affected by cooperative projects and management plans (i.e., Stewardship plans, LAWS contracts, CRP and WRP contracts, stream habitat improvement projects, Forest Cropland contracts).
- ✓ Number of local governments/communities assisted with forest management.
- ✓ Number of landowner contacts.
- ✓ Landowner attitudes measured by surveys.
- ✓ Documented positive changes in the landscape using GIS imagery.

Strategic Issue: Increasing Use of Missouri's Forest Resources

The forest products industry is developing faster and more efficient harvest equipment and more productive ways to utilize forest products, which are all generating a greater value for trees, including those that were previously considered unmarketable. World wide demand for forest products is growing, and supply in some key forested areas such as the tropics is declining. Moreover, the U.S. Forest Service is beginning to limit timber harvests. Therefore, a potential exists for over harvest of trees on private land in Missouri as different forest product industries compete in the same sourcing area. Landowners may be encouraged to harvest trees at a rate that may not be sustainable on a regional or statewide basis. The result could be degraded water quality, loss of fish and wildlife habitat, decreased biodiversity and other adverse impacts to forest resources.

Desired Result

- ❖ Sustainable forests.
- ❖ Improved quality and diversity of Missouri's private forest resources.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Annual or semi-annual growth rates vs. harvest.
- ✓ Forest Inventory and Analysis and Timber Product Output survey results.
- ✓ Number of forest acres managed through professionally developed plans.
- ✓ Number of landowners who manage and harvest trees following a professionally developed plan.
- ✓ Number of commercial logging companies and operators that have completed the voluntary Master Logger Program.

Goal 5: Public Land that Invites Public Use

Overview: A key element to conservation is public use. If people are able to benefit directly from the presence of fish, forest, and wildlife resources, they will be more likely to support resource needs and management. Conservation areas and facilities are the most important linkage between the people and the resources; therefore, it is vitally important that our public lands and facilities invite public use. This means that lands and facilities must be relatively accessible, safe from undesirable elements, and managed and governed in a way that people are able to pursue conservation related activities conveniently. Opening and closing times for areas and facilities, the kinds of uses allowed or limited, and the manner in which we promote public use can all have an effect on whether the public feels comfortable and invited or not.

While conservation areas cannot not be all things for all people, offering an array of opportunities compatible with resource protection and management is critical. Moreover, we must do so in a friendly, engaging manner. People should want to visit and use our areas.

Strategic Issue: Conservation Area Enforcement

The Department currently owns or leases over 950,000 acres of public land on 1,072 conservation areas statewide. Approximately, 470 of these areas provide access to Missouri's rivers, streams and lakes. Citizens' use of these areas continues to increase and reaches far beyond hunters and fishermen. Today Department areas are routinely used for activities such as camping, boater access, hiking, horseback riding, and family picnics. Unfortunately, undesirable activities like drug production and use (e.g., growing marijuana and producing methamphetamine drugs), drinking parties and vandalism also occur on some areas. Associated with this increased public use, is the expectation that conservation agents should routinely patrol these areas to ensure public safety, protect property and enforce state laws and Wildlife Code regulations. To address non-resource violations and enforcement problems, regions have used intensive special patrols to curtail illegal activities. Additionally, these special patrols to reduce non wildlife related crimes have resulted in fewer hours available for conservation agents to patrol lands and rivers for fish and wildlife related violations. Conservation agents' primary focus is toward enforcing the Wildlife Code, while often the majority of the general public expects they address non resource crimes on these areas.

Desired Results

- ❖ Prioritization of Wildlife Code enforcement on Department areas.
- ❖ Quality recreational experiences for all legitimate areas users.
- ❖ Safety for general public and Department area employees.
- ❖ Reduced vandalism on Department areas.

Performance Measures

- ✓Public perceptions to determine if resource and non-resource crimes are decreasing or increasing.
- ✓Frequency of violations on Department areas by types of crimes, frequency of crimes and court results for levels of punishment.
- ✓Public satisfaction regarding safety and quality recreational experiences.

Strategic Issue: Regulations for Public and Resource Management on Department Areas

A consistent theme outlined in Regional Management Guidelines is the need to simplify Department area regulations in a way that makes them understandable for the public and effective in resource management. Some Department areas are heavily utilized, thereby highlighting the need for regulations that are, in some cases, distinct from statewide regulations. Moreover, many staff seem to feel that 4.115 rules could be improved. Therefore, it is desirable that the Department continue what has been a long term effort to standardize 4.115 regulations, at least to the point of allowing managers to select from an array of regulation options designed to meet varying needs for area management.

Desired Results

- ❖Clear, concise, and simple Wildlife Code regulations that promote greater public understanding and compliance.
- ❖Simplified 4.115 regulations drawn from a list of alternative rules matched to specific management needs.

Performance Measures

- ✓Public understanding and compliance.
- ✓Staff satisfaction with 4.115 regulations.

Strategic Issue: Land Acquisition Priorities and Facilities Planning

The Department prepared a comprehensive Land Acquisition Plan in 1991, and this plan has been very useful in prioritizing Department land purchases. Several events have occurred since 1991 that now limit the plan's utility and justify its revision and update. Regional Management Guidelines (RMGs) were prepared by Department staff in 1998-1999 to identify key regional resource priorities. Land purchases identified during the RMG effort may or may not have been included in the original guide. Major floods in 1993 and 1995 stimulated a land acquisition effort along Missouri's major rivers that was not envisioned at the time of the 1991 plan. In addition, expansion plans for new conservation areas, those acquired since 1991, are not addressed in the

original document. Additional justification for revision is based on the Department's present access to relatively new geographic information system (GIS) technology. This technology allows automated identification, storage and retrieval of both purchase priorities and acquisition achievements in geographically related formats. A need also exists to map out future offices and facilities on Department areas in order to efficiently plan and budget for these types of development.

Desired Results

- ❖ An updated GIS-based land acquisition plan to guide Department land purchases.
- ❖ An automatically updated, GIS based acquisition accomplishment monitoring system.
- ❖ A comprehensive Department office and facilities plan.

Performance Measures

- ✓ An updated land acquisition plan available to staff by July 1, 2000.
- ✓ Completed office and facilities plan by July 1, 2000.

Goal 6: Integration of Conservation Principles and Urban Lifestyles

Overview: Two of the biggest challenges for the future are 1) how to manage fish, forest, and wildlife resources in and around Missouri's urban areas and 2) how to keep urbanites connected to the natural environment. Urban growth and development are gobbling-up habitat and natural communities, thereby eliminating or displacing all kinds species. The result is a decrease in biodiversity, loss of stream habitat, reduced water quality, and often an increase in human/wildlife conflicts (e.g., deer). Planned growth and development with consideration to greenspace, riparian corridors, stormwater runoff, and other fish, forest and wildlife needs can address urbanite desires and quality of life issues.

Related is the need to keep conservation and the natural environment fresh in the minds of urban dwellers. If people lose contact with the land, they will barely notice or care about potential negative impacts and fail to take preventative action. Moreover, a citizenry that is informed about environmental issues can make better decisions about the future of fish, forest, and wildlife in our state.

Strategic Issue: Connecting with Urban Constituents

Two-thirds of all Missourians live in the three metropolitan areas of St. Louis, Kansas City and Springfield. Reaching this large group of constituents is a continuous challenge. Urban media outlets are not readily accessible, except in cases of controversy or at great expense, and our traditional programs have limited relevance to urban lifestyles. It is important that we learn what urbanites expect from our agency, and deliver programs that meet their needs while fulfilling our

constitutional mandate to manage the state's fish, forest and wildlife resources for all Missourians.

Desired Result

- ❖ Greater awareness and support of conservation by urban constituents, and greater participation in Department programs.
- ❖ Greater exposure of urban children to conservation through educational programs and activities such as outdoor skills, shooting sports, and hunter education.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Awareness and support of Department activities by urban constituents.
- ✓ Number of urban constituents at special events, nature programs, outdoor skills and hunter education.
- ✓ Number of urban constituents using Department areas.

Strategic Issue: Urban Sprawl and Natural Resources

Urban sprawl and the accompanying loss of natural resources are affecting both urban and rural areas throughout the state. Whether it is a new subdivision built on an old prairie, homes on 3 acre lots in the woods at the edge of town, or a new commercial/business area, natural resources are lost. As development occurs, wildlife habitat is fragmented, streams are channelized, buried or otherwise destroyed; and forests and prairies become parts of yards, if they are even left at all. Some patterns of development are more beneficial for natural resources than others, and greenspace is considered important by many people in the urban areas. There is great potential to raise public awareness regarding the detrimental effects of unplanned growth to the natural resources and human quality of life. The Department should work with the public, their political representatives, planners, and developers to guide environmentally friendly growth through development that incorporates greenspace and protects riparian and forested areas.

Desired Results

- ❖ Reduced impacts of urban development on natural resources.
- ❖ Citizen participation in development issues.
- ❖ Citizen recognition of the link between resource conservation and quality of life.
- ❖ Environmentally sound planned urban growth.
- ❖ Public land ownership in urban areas.
- ❖ Dedicated urban greenspace.

Performance Measure

- ✓ Acres in public ownership, land trusts, easements, and greenspace.
- ✓ Number of communities adopting "smart growth" or similar initiatives.

Strategic Issue: Lack of Fishing Opportunities in Urban Areas

As urban areas continue to expand and the urban population increases, lack of close-to-home ponds and lakes for fishing becomes more apparent. For example, about 2 million people live in the St. Louis Region (49% or about 900,000 fish), and they have only about 1,200 acres of flat-water (750 anglers/acre of water) to use within St. Louis, Jefferson, and St. Charles counties. The Missouri and Mississippi rivers are also under-utilized resources due to a lack of direct access to the rivers.

Desired Results

- ❖ Increased numbers and acreage of public fishing lakes in the St. Louis and Kansas City metropolitan areas.
- ❖ Increased number of big river and stream accesses in the St. Louis and Kansas City regions.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Number and acreage of public fishing lakes within a 20 minute drive of St. Louis and Kansas City metropolitan area anglers.
- ✓ Number of big river and stream accesses within a 20 minute drive of St. Louis and Kansas City metropolitan area anglers.

Goal 7: Effective Conservation Partnerships

Overview: Achieving the level of success we desire is contingent upon our ability to create effective partnerships. Single programs or agencies cannot be all things to all people, nor do they have all the necessary resources. Sharing resources, including creativity and innovation, allows us to have a greater effect, whether it be on the landscape, in the classroom, or in the meeting room where decisions and policy are made. A willingness to seek out financial and intellectual partnerships results in positive, synergistic reactions and interactions, and ultimately better serves the public interest.

Strategic Issue: Leveraging Department Funds

Funding is a continuous issue as the Department struggles to provide programs and services to meet fish, forest, and wildlife needs and public demand. Many people stand ready to donate to the conservation cause and many public and private organizations will provide funds for a wide variety of projects that can benefit fish, forests, and wildlife. The Department has a good track record in acquiring outside funds from the “usual sources.” However, learning how to tap other less traditional sources like major foundations and corporate sponsors could greatly enhance our ability to stretch the taxpayers’ dollar. The Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation will facilitate our learning in this regard; however, development of staff skills to pursue outside dollars

and a moderate shift in thinking toward the notion of more partnerships will improve our overall financial position.

Desired results

❖ Outside, nontraditional dollars available for Department projects.

Performance measures

- ✓ Number of dollars and value of in-kind support received by the Department and through the Foundation annually.
- ✓ Number of projects or programs funded with outside dollars.
- ✓ Number of funding agreements in effect.

Strategic Issue: Passage of Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA)

With over 800 species currently on the Missouri Species of Conservation Concern Checklist, additional funds are needed for management, restoration and land acquisition to benefit natural communities and declining species. Less than 1% of Missouri pre-settlement prairie remains and only 5% of historic wetlands exist. Grassland birds in Missouri comprise a large group of declining wildlife species. Additional funding is needed to help reverse the 30-year downward trend for many other bird species monitored through the annual Breeding Bird Survey. Additions to the Federal list of endangered and threatened species will continue to grow and the five federal candidate species will continue to decrease in number without additional funding. Additional funding is needed to develop fish and wildlife access viewing facilities on Department lands to make these areas available for the nearly 80% of the population that enjoys watching wildlife. Expanded funding is needed for forming productive partnerships with other agencies, organizations and communities to further conservation and wildlife-related outdoor recreation and education.

Desired Result

❖ Legislative approval of funding, such as CARA or other similar measures, dedicated to non-game, wildlife diversity and associated recreational activities.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Passage of funding measures.
- ✓ Number of partnership funding agreements in effect.

Strategic Issue: Information Sharing Among and Between Conservation Interest Groups and Stakeholders

The number of interest groups and non-governmental organizations that participate directly or indirectly in fish, forest, and wildlife conservation has grown significantly over the past 15 years. While some groups regularly interact and partner with the Department, many do not. In addition many, if not most are unaware of their own similarities and opportunities for partnerships between groups.

Many conservation issues are too big for one agency or group to handle independently. Moreover, the future health of the conservation movement in Missouri is dependent upon unity and communication among and between all groups and organizations.

Desired results

❖ Greater awareness among the various conservation interests of opportunities to work together and share resources.

Performance measures

✓ Number of groups/individuals represented at the annual Conservation Focus meeting.

Goal 8: Retain Public Support and Recruit New Participants

Overview: Providing a variety of high quality, conservation related recreational opportunities is a critical part of the Department's mission. Hunting and fishing are important Missouri traditions. Camping, hiking, canoeing, and wildlife-watching are major outdoor activities for many Missourians and visitors to the state. Moreover, all of these activities and more carry with them a significant positive impact to the state's economy. As diverse as the activities involved, are the people. Rural and urban people often differ greatly in their expectations, and therefore, look for different levels of access and amenities. People of all walks of life also differ in their definition of a quality recreational experience. Age, gender, ability, and cultural differences also influence participation and expectations and will continue to challenge us as we look for ways to provide opportunities and balance resource management needs.

Strategic Issue: Declining Participation in Small Game Hunting

Participation in small game hunting has declined precipitously during the past three decades (e.g., from >160,000 quail hunters annually in the 1960s and 1970s to >100,000 in the late 1980s to about 60,000 current hunters). This downward trend has important negative implications for rural culture and economics, and for Department revenue. For those close to rural life styles, the issues seem to focus on wildlife abundance and access to private lands. For those people living a more

urban life style, the relevance of small game hunting is the issue. Access to land, competing interest and lack of time, lack of knowledge, and negative feelings about guns and hunting jeopardizes the future participation by urban dwellers, thereby threatening a time honored tradition.

Desired Results

- ❖ Increase in small game hunting participation to 1987 levels.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Hunting participation rates for Missourians.
- ✓ Number of annual resident and non resident permits sold.
- ✓ Number of days afield by small game hunters.
- ✓ Small game hunter satisfaction.

Strategic Issue: Angler Participation Rates

Nationally, license sales for freshwater fishing are declining. In some states, declines of up to 19% have been reported compared to years of peak license sales. While license sales in Missouri have not significantly declined, we have had a “no growth” period over the last eight years. Missouri’s population is becoming increasingly urbanized. While teens and young adults continue to have positive attitudes and an awareness of fishing as a valued and enjoyable recreational pursuit, there is increased competition for their free time. Also, Missouri’s population is aging and the proportion of potential new angler recruits who might be introduced to the enjoyment and benefits of recreational angling is declining. Surveys indicate that people become anglers at a relatively early age or not at all. Our challenge is to develop and implement measures which will increase the number of anglers in Missouri. Increased participation would have a direct positive effect on Department income, build a stronger clientele and support base for the Department and its programs and lead to strong public support for fisheries resource protection and management.

Desired Results

- ❖ Increase angling participation in Missouri.

Performance Measures

- ✓ Resident permit sales.
- ✓ Angler participation rates in Missouri and by Missourians.
- ✓ Public satisfaction with Missouri angling opportunities.

Strategic Issue: Recreational Opportunities on Conservation Areas

The recent *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* documented high interest and demand for nature related outdoor recreation. In addition, public use surveys on selected Department areas revealed large numbers of visitors interested in hiking, nature viewing and other activities beyond the traditions of hunting and fishing. Compatibility concerns are common when planning area recreational use (e.g., hunting vs. hiking/biking vs. resource protection); however, we should attempt to balance these opportunities to the degree possible. Providing adequate and diverse resource oriented recreational experiences in each region will help meet demand and nurture future support for conservation. Furthermore, Department areas should be user friendly, well maintained, and where practical, facilities should reflect a commitment to family-oriented recreation.

Desired Results

- ❖Diverse recreational opportunities in each region consistent with fish, forest, and wildlife management needs.
- ❖All areas meeting Department maintenance standards.

Performance Measures

- ✓Number of Conservation Areas users participating in non-consumptive, resource oriented recreational activities.
- ✓Number of Community Assistance Program and Corporate and Agency Partnership Program facilities open to the public.

Planning And Budgeting Timetable

July	Begin new fiscal year; draft strategic plan document submitted to Office of Administration, Budget and Planning; updated plan with progress report is distributed Department-wide; Executive Budget process begins.
August	Executive Budget development continues, Form 5 is distributed to Divisions; Divisions develop (or revisit) policy direction statements
September	Executive budgeting continues; Divisions complete and distribute policy direction statements
October	Executive budget and strategic plan submitted to OA Budget and Planning by October 1; preliminary internal planning and budget instructions out for review by Division Administrators, Unit Chiefs, and Regional Coordination Teams (RCTs)
November	Continue review of internal planning and budget instructions by Division Administrators, Unit Chiefs, and Regional Coordination Teams (RCTs)
December	Final internal planning and budget instruction distributed to Division Administrators, Unit Chiefs, and RCTs
January	Internal budgeting begins; regional planning and budgeting begins; RCTs develop regional budgets
February	Regional planning and budgeting continues; regional budget requests due to Unit Chiefs mid-February
March	Unit Chiefs and Division Administrators review regional budgets, submit budgets to Deputy Director mid-March
April	Administrative review of budget requests
May	Internal budget goes to Commission for review and approval; strategic plan review and progress reporting begins
June	Strategic plan review and progress reporting continues; new strategic issues are considered

For more information about the
Missouri Department of Conservation's
Strategic Plan, please contact:

**Missouri Department of Conservation
Policy Coordination Section
P.O. Box 180
Jefferson City, MO 65102**

Phone: 573-751-4115